

natively that one of the forms from eastern Tibet extends further south than has been suspected.

The facts are as follows:—

R. roxellanae—E. Tibet and N. W. China to Koko Nor.

R. biete—Yunnan, left bank of Mekong and right bank of Blue River.

R. brelichi—Van Gin Shan Mts., north of Kwei-chow Province, Central China.

Presbytiscus avunculus—Tonkin. Van Gin Shan Mts., north of Kwei-chow Province, Central China.—EDS.]

2. RIOTOUS BEHAVIOUR OF MATING BEARS (*MELURSUS URSINUS*)

On the night of June 11th bears overturned a Craven Power Sprayer (in a coffee clearing), bit through one of the wheels, chewed the tarpaulin covering it, gnawed some of the spray hose, and smashed down several 4-year old Silver Oak (*Grevillea*) saplings. Next morning they demonstrated at spraying labourers and others on a tractor trailer and, after the hurried departure of the labour, overturned a barrel of Bordeaux mixture and two or three empty casks. I received the news of the bears' misbehaviour on my return from a visit to our *rugi* farm. In the evening I saw the bears (three of them) in the distance, but it was too late to go after them. On the 13th morning I spotted them in the same place. A large disconsolate male kept at a safe distance emitting plaintive howls, while another male, slightly heavier, accompanied the female alternately caressing (so it appeared) and frantically chasing her. The lone male frequently sat up on his haunches to get a better view of the proceedings. Twice he went up to *Kydia calycina* trees (locally known as 'Benday murra') and tore off great strips of the bark—whether solely in rage or also urged by hunger I am not sure. But a subsequent examination of the trees and surroundings indicated that *some* of the bark had been eaten.*

By the time I had got near the bears they had shifted their positions somewhat. I found myself within a fair distance of a bundle of bears up against a rock. Which was which I couldn't tell and they may have been in coitus. My first shot mortally wounded the larger male and he dropped dead within a few seconds. The she-bear was then badly hit and disappeared into a nearby deep cave. It was obvious that the disconsolate male, though frightened off by the shots, would return, which he did right soon. He proceeded to fall upon the dead body of his erstwhile rival with a savagery which had to be seen to be believed, screaming at the top of his voice the whole time.

In spite of three hard hits, rolling him over each time, he was able to get away. He skirted 5 caves, went down to water (which was his undoing) and finished up half inside a shallow cave, having travelled 2 miles mortally wounded; bears are tough.

The she-bear had to be smoked out as the cave was too deep to penetrate normally, and she died from suffocation. Three years ago

I had crawled into the same cave after what I thought was a dead bear. It was a most foolhardy thing to do; instead of one dead bear there were two live ones within and I was fortunate to escape with my life!

* For the last 3 or 4 years bears have been tearing off the bark of fir trees planted nearby; it was evident that some of the bark had been consumed. The period referred to covers a succession of very dry years. Bears normally eat little during their mating season; when this coincides with abnormally dry years it is likely they will go for the bark of certain trees (the bark of *Kydia calycina* is a favourite food of elephants). It is presumed the Silver Oak shade saplings were 'tasted' in hunger; or smashed in an abandon of temper.

HONNAMETTI ESTATE,
ATTIKAN P.O.,
VIA MYSORE,
June 20, 1952.

R. C. MORRIS

3. CASES OF UNWOUNDED GAUR OR INDIAN BISON (*BIBOS GAURUS*) CHARGING

In Vol. 48, No. 3 of the Society's *Journal* I referred to a case of a solitary bull bison's apparently unprovoked charge when met on a path in evergreen jungle. For some days a tiger had been harassing bison in this area. About the same time another case occurred of a bison charging a well-known sportsman at the foot of the Nilgiris as it trotted out of a tiger-beat. This bull also had not been fired at.

More recently, two beaters were killed by a bull bison in a tiger beat, the animal charging them at close quarters.

In each case a tiger was in the area. 'Nerves' induced by the presence of tiger and/or, possibly the noise of a beat, would appear to infuriate unwounded bulls which are then apt to charge intruders or beaters.

In my lifetime in India quite a number of instances have occurred to refute the assertion that no unwounded gaur will attack.

HONNAMETTI ESTATE,
ATTIKAN P.O.,
VIA MYSORE,
June 23, 1952.

R. C. MORRIS

4. WILD BUFFALOES AND TAME

(With a photo)

In Narayanpur tahsil of Bastar district a wild buffalo bull had been driven out from the wild herd and had become solitary. Subsequently a herd of tame buffaloes was taken into his jungle for summer grazing. He killed the stud bull of this herd and used to accompany the tame